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Mayor Dixon Applauds Passage of Gun Offender Registry Legislation

Baltimore, MD (September 17, 2007) – Mayor Sheila Dixon thanked members of the Baltimore City Council for passing City Council Bill 07-0738, which establishes a Gun Offender Registry. The legislation was created to help the Baltimore Police Department monitor the city's most violent offenders.

"I am grateful to the City Council for passing this important piece of legislation," said Mayor Dixon. "In our fight against violent crime, this will be a useful tool to help the police take criminals off the streets."

Once signed into law, Baltimore's Gun Offender Registry will require individuals convicted of gun offenses in Baltimore City to register their current address and report to the Baltimore Police Department every six months for a period of three years following their conviction or period of incarceration. Within 48 hours of conviction, each gun offender will be required to file their names and aliases, a photograph, and a confirmed address. Failure to comply with the registration requirement is a misdemeanor and punishable by a fine of not more than \$1000 or imprisonment of not more than 12 months or both.

A key component of Mayor Dixon's Crime Strategy is targeted enforcement, and the most important target is illegal guns and the people who carry them. The data shows that persons convicted of gun offenses are re-arrested at a high rate, often committing new criminal offenses while armed. Recent GunStat statistics show that 42% of defendants charged with felony gun crimes have prior gun arrests. In addition, over 50% of suspects arrested on homicide charges have prior gun convictions. Baltimore's Gun Offender Registry will help Baltimore combat gun violence by enabling pro-active monitoring of gun offenders – to prevent them from re-offending and increasing prompt apprehension of these gun offenders if they do engage in criminal activity.

Baltimore is the second city in the United States to pass a gun offender registry. It is modeled after New York City's registry, which was the first in the nation. It differs from New York's by being a public rather than private registry.

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